

Intellectual Property: Patents, Trade / Service Marks, Designs, Copyright

Tel - ☎ - 01730 823 647

NIGEL BROOKS Chartered Patent Agent
NS Brooks MA, assisted by JA Boynton D Phil.

Fax - ✉ - 01730 823 580

Hill Hampton, East Meon, Petersfield, Hampshire GU32 1QN, UK

Your Ref:

My Ref:

9 June, 2004

2078/PCT

The European Patent Office
D-80298 Munchen
Germany

BY FAX INITIALLY 00 49 89 2399 4465

Dear Sirs,

Re: International Patent Application No. PCT/GB03/03411
Cavity Protection Systems Ltd

I write in response to the Written Opinion dated 7th April 2004.

Please find enclosed amended claims and specification to replace those currently on file.

The examiner has objected to claim 1 of the application on the grounds that all features thereof are taught by US 4 778 968 Torres. While I accept this to be the case, there are significant differences between the citation and the present invention.

The citation teaches a container for lining a microwave oven and comprises a top, a bottom, a back, two side walls, and significantly a front. The front is provided as a door to allow access to the inside of the container. The top is provided with an array of apertures over its entire surface. This container has a number of disadvantages. Firstly, by providing a six-sided container, air flow within the microwave oven and particularly within the container is severely restricted. Generally in a microwave oven, air is drawn in through the top or back of the oven and is blown along the top towards the front. When it hits the front door, it rebounds into the centre of the oven and onto the contents thereof. With the container of the citation, this cannot happen due to the door in the container. This can lead to uneven temperatures in the oven and can even lead to pressure differentials between the inside of the container and the outside, which is clearly a potential hazard. In addition, the provision of apertures in the top of the container will allow a certain amount of air circulation, but it also allows food splatters to escape the container and foul the top of the microwave oven.

Claim 1 has therefore been amended to incorporate the feature of original claim 2, namely that the roof is shorter at the front the floor to allow air steam to circulate for steam withdrawal from the oven. I submit that this is novel over the citation discussed above. Furthermore, I submit that

this is inventive over the prior art. The prior art, as the present invention, was designed to provide a lining for a microwave oven that would dramatically reduce the need to clean the inside of the oven. Clearly the obvious thing to do is to provide a container that fully lines the oven, and therefore gives a much protection as possible. This is what the prior art does, being a six-sided container. However, the inventor of the present application realised that this resulted in a serious problem with regards to air circulation in the oven. Once he had formulated the problem, the solution was to provide openings in the container. Clearly the provision of vents at various places would have been another solution. However, the inventor decided that by leaving off the front, and providing the liner as a five-sided container, he solved the problem with regards to air circulation. Importantly this also allowed the liner to perform its task of dramatically reducing the cleaning of the oven, as the only portion thereof that would need to be cleaned would be the door. This is obviously the most accessible part of the oven and therefore the most easily cleaned. Thus I submit that amended claim 1 is novel and inventive over the prior art and request that the examiner issue a favourable international preliminary examination report thereon.

Yours faithfully

NIGEL BROOKS

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